

Fisher (G. J.)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES
OF THE
DECEASED PHYSICIANS

Of Westchester Co., N. Y.



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WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N. Y.

BEING THE ANNUAL ADDRESS BEFORE THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY MEDICAL
SOCIETY, AT ITS SESSION HELD IN WHITE PLAINS, JUNE 1, 1858.

By GEORGE J. FISHER, A.M., M.D.,

PRESIDENT OF THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY; PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION; PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF
NEW YORK; FELLOW OF THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF MEDICINE; MEMBER OF
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

GENTLEMEN—MEMBERS OF THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY:

I propose as the subject of my address on the present occasion, a few brief and imperfect Biographical Sketches of the Deceased Members of the Medical Profession of Westchester County.

Although medicine, in its history, its ethics, its relations to other and collateral sciences, offers a wide range from which to select a subject, the task of choosing one which has not already been treated upon has not been easy.

Having at last determined on that which I have just announced, as being one never before attempted in this County, I have hoped to be able to interest you for a brief hour, and at the same time, to place on record "the plain, unvarnished tale" of the character, merits, trials, and experience of those medical men who have previously been the incumbents of the field which we now occupy.

How frequently are we reminded, when called to the families of the older inhabitants, of those who, years long passed, visited the same houses upon a like errand of mercy as ourselves! How many hours have we spent in listening to detailed accounts of the many virtues and the wonderful skill of those good old doctors, who were always looked to for aid in the day of anxiety, tribulation, or peril! We have been told how they rode on horseback, with their apothecary-shop snugly packed in huge leathern saddle-bags, which hung over their horse's back behind them; how promptly they responded to a call, though "in the dead waste and middle of the night;" how cheerfully they came; how patiently they remained, to watch their patients and witness the effects of their remedies.

As we have listened to these kind reminiscences of our elder brethren, who has not felt a strong desire to know more of their birth, education, and medical pupilage, as well as their social, moral, intellectual

and professional character? But, alas! how little is known of them. They have expended their days, their talents and skill, quietly and unostentatiously among those who doubtless appreciated their services while living, and sincerely mourned their loss when dead.

“Far from the madd’ning crowd’s ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life,
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.”

Their mortal remains and biography have been consigned to one common grave. Of many, not even the place of their interment is known; while in a few instances,

—————“these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still, erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck’d,
Implores the tribute of a sigh.”

“Their name, their years, spelt by th’ unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply.”

Their memories are treasured for a brief period by their kind patrons, but the second generation barely remember their names, and soon they pass into oblivion.

While it becomes our duty to be ever contending with disease, and ever vigilant to avert the shafts of death, so thickly strewn on every hand, all along the voyage of life—from the cradle to the grave—yet all, patient and physician, sooner or later, must yield to the unconquered, and “depart alike to the inevitable grave.”

“Who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e’er resigned;
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?”

I hope we are all inspired by an ambition so to live, to improve ourselves, and benefit our race, that our memories may be thought worthy of record and preservation.

I entered upon the present undertaking, which, at the commencement, was supposed to be an easy one, but which soon proved to be quite the reverse, both from a long-cherished pleasure which the biography of medical men has afforded me, and still more, as a labor of love towards those who have resigned their responsibilities and their places into our hands, that we may continue where their labor ceased,

and in turn, transmit to a succeeding generation the accumulated stores of past experience.

Gladly would I have had another perform this task; yet as none up to the present time have found either the leisure or inclination to undertake and accomplish a biographical memoir of the deceased physicians of our county, I felt it almost a duty to be thus "mindful of the unhonored dead."

I have not been able to find a single sketch of a member of our Society among its records, nor even in any medical journal, book, or pamphlet, notwithstanding it is more than sixty years since our organization; yet it cannot be supposed that so many years could have rolled away without some worthy members of the profession having been called from their earthly spheres of usefulness, whose character, devotion, and skill merited a brief memoir. Our county—one of the oldest and most honorable in the State, famous for its localities of interest, rendering it classic ground to every American, and boasting of such men as Paulding, Williams, and Van Wart, John Jay, Daniel D. Tompkins, Washington Irving, and other celebrities—certainly should have possessed some physicians worthy of mention. True, the life of a medical man is in a measure obscure; he is not brought before the masses; there is no forum or pulpit for our profession to develop and display the talents of its votaries; they quietly and unobserved pursue the objects of their calling, minister to the afflicted, from birth to extreme old age, explore all nature in search of still better remedial agents, exhaust all art with the same great purpose in view, investigate untiringly the occult and secret nature and sources of the thousand ills that our poor mortality is heir to, and yet—

"Far off the public stage,
Pass away their silent age."

There have been in our county medical men whose education, character, and skill, and whose devotion to the cause of science and the interests of humanity, though perhaps exercised in a more humble sphere, nevertheless deserve at our hands "some frail memorial" of commendation and perpetuation.

We should remember that our whole duty is not performed when the dead are "each in their narrow cells forever laid;" obligations still rest upon us; the living owe a duty to those who have waived them a final adieu, as they left the shores of time, as well as to the generations yet unborn.

In preparing the following sketches, I have endeavored to apply to

reliable sources for information, involving no trifling amount of correspondence, and I desire here to acknowledge my obligations and return my sincere thanks to all who have interested themselves in this work of fraternal affection, by responding to the circular of inquiries addressed to them; while I regret that many, from whom much was expected, have failed to answer; yet they must be charitably excused, as the multifarious duties, both professional and domestic, and the difficulties of obtaining the required information, would deter most men from the undertaking, unless impelled by a spirit of enthusiasm.

Meagre and unsatisfactory as many of the sketches are, yet it is hoped that, at least to every physician of our own county, these brief memoirs will be of interest. Should any be able to add material of interest to any or all of them, I hope he will not delay nor hesitate to do so; or what would be still better, to commence the work *de novo*. In many cases the words of the correspondents have been employed, as nothing additional could be obtained, or the sketches in any way improved.

Unfortunately the records of the Westchester County Medical Society, from its organization, May 8th, 1797, to June, 1830, have been lost or destroyed, on which account, doubtless, many of the names of its earlier members have not come to the knowledge of the writer; and perhaps, for the same reason, many interesting professional facts connected with the lives of those that are included in these memoirs.

What has here been attempted for ours, has been ably done for Albany County, by my friend Dr. S. D. Willard, in an address before the Medical Society of that county, which was subsequently communicated by it to the State Medical Society, in the Transactions of which, for 1857, it was published. The same thing has been done by Dr. S. H. French, for Broome County, in an address in 1854, published by that County Medical Society. The biographical sketches of Dr. French, however, included those who were then engaged in practice in Broome County, an undertaking of too delicate a character to justify many in the attempt.

"The life of a good physician," says Dr. Delafield, in his sketch of the late Dr. J. Kearney Rodgers, "does not always furnish materials most available to the biographer. He may have practiced long and successfully; may have formed a large circle of deeply attached friends and patients; may have been beloved and honored by the poor; have gained the respect and esteem of every member of his own profession; have added his fair proportion to the improvements of the day, in his science and his art; and in dying, left a whole community to deplore

his loss, and feel, for the time, that his place could not be supplied; and yet leave behind him no materials from which a biography could be drawn up of deep interest beyond his own profession, and the circle of patients among whom he moved."

"It is men of this stamp who leave behind them the regret that they have left no written memorial of what they have learned and what they have accomplished. And it always must be so. The practicing physician who moves most among the sick, and is most esteemed during his lifetime, has little leisure to write. The labors of a long day in country or town, with the cares and anxieties caused by attendance on numerous cases involving danger and often death, are no good preparation for the use of the pen at night. And every day do such men see and learn many things they would be glad to contribute to the common stock of their profession's knowledge; but it cannot be. They go on, day after day, and year after year, learning more and knowing more, until they begin to feel that they have somewhat mastered the difficulties of their science; have somewhat learned what to discard among rules of art handed down from ages, and what to retain; have even felt that they themselves have added something to the great professional treasury; they drop into the grave, and carry all with them."

DR. ARCHIBALD MACDONALD, of White Plains, will first claim our attention, as being one of the most distinguished of the earlier physicians of our county, of whom we have been able to obtain any satisfactory account; but more especially from the fact of his having been prominent among the founders of this Medical Society, now in the sixty-first year of its age.

In the first volume of the *Medical Repository*, which was the first medical journal ever published in America, under date of June 25th, 1797, may be found the following notice:

"On the 8th of May, at the White Plains, there was a meeting of respectable physicians of the County of Westchester, who formed themselves into a society, to be known and called by the name and style of '*The Medical Society of the County of Westchester.*' Dr. Archibald Macdonald was elected President, and Dr. Matson Smith, of New Rochelle, Secretary. The principal views of their formation appear to be a harmonious establishment of a regular practice of physic throughout the county, and an immediate compliance of the law of the Legislature of the State, made at the last session."

Dr. Archibald Macdonald (not McDonald) was a native of Inverness, in Scotland, and belonged to what was called the Glengarry branch of the Macdonalds. The Glengarries write their name Macdonell, but the Dr., in the latter part of his life, adopted the orthography generally used by the other Macdonald families.

When the Stuarts, in 1745, made their last attempt to recover the crown, the doctor's father joined Charles Edward, the pretender, with enthusiasm, and during that or the following year perished in battle, when his son Archibald was but a few weeks old; so the parent and his youngest child never saw each other.

Archibald came to this country at the age of twelve years, being about the year 1757. He lived for a while in Canada, and received his medical education in Philadelphia, to which place he was sent by his brother, an officer in the British service. For a number of years he practiced his profession in North Carolina; he also served several years as a surgeon in the British army.

In the year 1787, he married in Dutchess County, in this State, and continued to reside there for several years, and finally, in the year 1795, settled at White Plains, where he practiced his profession down to the time of his death, which occurred on the 21st day of December, 1813. The place of his sepulchre is designated by a tombstone in the cemetery of the Presbyterian Church in that village.

He died after three or four days' illness, of what was then usually termed "the winter fever," an epidemic said at the time to be fatal among persons advanced in life, being, at the time of his decease, sixty-eight years of age.

From a genealogical manuscript in the handwriting of his brother, it appears that he was a descendant of Robert de Bruce; one of his ancestors having married a daughter of that monarch.

His manner and disposition were hearty, frank and joyous, but his temper was quick and irritable; it is proper to add, that he was a man of remarkable personal courage.

Of his professional reputation, we are informed that he occupied a high standing, both with the people and his brethren. His practice was extensive, and he was often called on consultations or otherwise, to great distances. Like most physicians, in his own family he gave very little medicine, and even in his general practice he employed much less medicine than physicians usually did in those days; frequently prescribing gentle remedies, more for the encouragement of the patient, than what he deemed the necessity of the case. Long after his death,

his old patients would remark that his cheerful and assuring words seemed at once to bring relief, and half to perform the cure.

His son, James Macdonald, studied medicine first with Dr. David Palmer, of White Plains, and afterwards with the celebrated Dr. David Hosack, of New York. Dr. James Macdonald turned his attention chiefly to the study of insanity; visited Europe, and all its establishments for the cure of the insane, and returning to this country, became one of the founders and proprietors of the Sanford Hall Asylum, at Flushing, L. I. He died, much lamented, in the year 1849. Several biographical sketches of him have been published; one of considerable length in the *American Journal of Insanity*, in the July number for 1849; and also a sermon by Rev. Dr. Ogilby, on his funeral occasion. His brother, Allen Macdonald, to whom I am indebted for many of the above facts, continues the charge of the asylum alluded to.

DR. SAMUEL ADAMS, of Mount Pleasant, was born in Scotland; he came to this country about the time of the American Revolution, having been a surgeon in the British army. In a communication from Mr. Allen Macdonald, he states that his "brother remembered to have heard both his father and the late Col. Rutgers, of New York, speak of him as a surgeon in the American Revolutionary army, and say that he was present as such at the memorable battle of White Plains." Also that his father, Dr. Archibald Macdonald, spoke of him as a good Latin scholar, having been a classical teacher before coming to this country, and that he had read extensively on anatomy and surgery. He is spoken of as a small, thin person, of rather a severe aspect; a man of great energy, indomitable will, and unflinching perseverance, highly passionate and profane, having no regard for the Christian religion.

Soon after the war, he settled about one and a half miles east of the upper cross-roads, where he cultivated a farm and practiced his profession for nearly or quite a half-century.

His medical education was doubtless superior for the period in which he lived. His habits, which he probably acquired while in the army and in war, gave him the sobriquet of "*the rough old surgeon*."

Such was his supposed skill in surgery, that if a broken bone was to be set, or any operation to be performed, he must necessarily be sent for, from all parts of the county; and when sent for, tradition says, however well the work may have been done previous to his arrival, he

would find some deficiency, and if possible do it over again, *secundum artem*, readjusting a fractured bone, or opening afresh a wound, and generally do it with the emphasis of an oath.

He was a bold, rough, yet successful surgeon. It is said that especially in the latter part of his practice, his instruments, like himself, becoming old, were rusty and dull, and though he seldom followed Bible precepts, he was obliged to adopt the advice of Solomon, viz.: "That if the tool be dull, lay on the more strength." Undoubtedly most of his cutting operations would be properly denominated "heroic practice." So he lived and rode over the country, and over his cotemporaries, swaying his sceptre over the heads of all with whom he came in contact. He was sent at least for one term to the Legislature of the State, and died about the year 1828, aged over ninety years.

The late Dr. Joseph Scribner was in the habit of relating the circumstance of his first interview with Dr. Adams, as being perfectly characteristic of the man. Overtaking him on horseback, one day, after mutual salutation, and making himself known as Dr. Scribner, the eccentric Dr. Adams scanned him with a penetrating glance, and said with a sneer, "Young man, do *you* intend to practice medicine? Well—you'll find it a dom mean business;" and putting spurs to his horse, rode rapidly away.

Dr. Adams was very erect and sprightly; when 90 years old, he rode on horseback as gracefully as a youth. He lived without God in the world, and it is to be feared died without reconciliation to that God whom he had neglected, if not despised, in his life.

DR. WILLIAM F. ARNOLD, of White Plains, was born in Chatham, Rensselaer Co., N. Y., June 1st, 1809. He was the son of a very respectable Methodist minister, whose brother, Samuel G. Arnold, was for a number of years editor and proprietor of "*The Westchester Spy*," published at White Plains.

William's early opportunities for education were very limited and irregular, in consequence of the itinerant character of his father's profession; at the age of fourteen he removed to Rhinebeck, where, by the special efforts of his sister and friends, he enjoyed the advantages for a time of a good classical school. Soon after he entered the drug-store of Drs. Platt and Nelson of that place. By attention to business, and the interest he manifested in the articles of the *Materia Medica* with which he was surrounded, he gained the respect and esteem of his em-

ployers, and was taken into their office as a medical student. In 1829, through the kindness and aid of his friends, he was enabled to attend a course of lectures in the Rutgers Medical College of the City of New York. During this term, it is said, he devoted his entire time and energies to the prosecution of his studies. It is not known to us whether he afterwards graduated, or became a licentiate of the State, or some county medical society.

About this time (1829) he located in White Plains, almost penniless; he soon, however, entered into a fair practice. In May, 1832, he married a Miss Williams, of Rhinebeck. A few months after, while apparently in the glow of health, and full of ambitious schemes and bright hopes, he was attacked with hæmoptysis, which recurring again and again as winter approached, induced him to remove to the City of New York, with the hope that the duties of his profession could be performed with less physical exertion and exposure. Finding his expectations not realized, and being oppressed by debt, he returned to White Plains and resumed an office practice in connection with an apothecary-shop, with his brother. This was a more successful enterprise; his health and finances were both improved thereby. In the autumn of 1834 his disease had so far returned or progressed, that it became apparent, unless a change of climate might stay its development, consumption was inevitable. He accordingly embarked for St. Thomas, W. I., where he safely arrived, and entered into the practice of dentistry, being unable to practice medicine. In the course of a year or two his disease had so far advanced that he resolved to return again to his native land and home. He died on the voyage; his grave is the mighty deep.

His disposition was remarkably social and confiding; his character and life that of a devout and humble Christian; thus he lived and died. Dr. Arnold was devoted to his profession, and from all we can learn of his talents and acquirements, under anything like favorable circumstances, he would have become eminent.

DR. FRANCIS FOWLER practiced in White Plains and vicinity about fifty or sixty years ago. He came from Newburgh, Orange County, N. Y., and soon after his arrival married a sister of ex-Sheriff Amos W. Hatfield, of White Plains. His talents and practice are said to have been respectable, and gave promise of good success; but in a few years after settling in White Plains (from four to six) he died, leaving a widow, but no children.

DR. BREWSTER, also, practiced in White Plains previous to or about the time of Dr. Fowler, but I have been unable to obtain any special information relating to his life and character.

DR. WILLIAM BALDWIN, late of New York City, lies beneath a large, plain, but handsome monument, in the yard of the first or old Methodist Church, of White Plains. He was born in Northford, Connecticut. Commenced practice about the year 1800. Married Elizabeth Falconer, daughter of John Falconer, a prominent citizen of White Plains, where he practiced with considerable success and acceptance for a period of about fifteen years. He then removed to the City of New York, and located himself in East Broadway; became a prominent and successful practitioner in that section of the city, and gained a more than ordinary practice and honorable position among his professional brethren. He died of a chronic organic disease of the stomach. He left a widow, but no children. She is yet living, and finds a pleasant home with Dr. Jared Linsly, of New York, who was an adopted son of Dr. Baldwin.

DR. LIVINGSTON ROE, of White Plains, was born at or near Flushing, Long Island, N. Y., in the year 1811. He was the son of Thomas Roe. Dr. L. Roe was carefully educated by a German teacher; he pursued his medical studies with Dr. John Graham, a respectable physician in the City of New York. Dr. G. was known to the profession of his day as the first, or at least among the first, subjects of successful extirpation of the parotid gland. Dr. Roe attended lectures principally at the "Rutgers Medical College," which, not obtaining a charter, was unable to confer degrees; it therefore had a brief existence. Dr. R. then attended courses of private lectures, under Drs. Bedford, Pendleton, Bush, &c. Subsequently he attended the medical lectures at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, where, it is said, he graduated. He married in New York, soon after which he went to White Plains, and established himself as a copartner of Dr. David Palmer, the only physician then practicing in that village. He practiced all branches of the profession for a period of thirteen years, with great ability and success. He at the same time carried on the business of an apothecary.

He died of ship fever, contracted while in attendance upon a number of emigrant vagrants in the alms-house of the county. He was also at the time attending upon a professional brother, Dr. Joseph Scribner, of Tarrytown, who also died of the same disease, contracted at the same place. There is no doubt that his indefatigable and anxious care of Dr. Scribner materially increased the exciting causes of the attack. Congestion of the brain supervened, and on Tuesday, January 11th, 1848, he died, having been ill but seven days. Dr. Roe left a wife, a son and two daughters, to mourn his loss.

The doctor was emphatically a self-made man; he enjoyed but few early advantages, but being endowed liberally with superior mental qualities, with great industry and force of character, he was enabled to rise superior to time and place. Opposing circumstances were met with a determination to overcome them, adequate to the nature and character of the obstacle. The doctor was actuated by a very laudable ambition to excel in his medical acquirements, and determined, in the outset of his career, to devote all his energies to attain an honorable professional eminence, and up to the time of his death he had not striven in vain for distinction.

He possessed, naturally, a frail constitution; he was tall and slender, predisposed, perhaps, to consumption, having a light complexion, very light, fine, straight hair; in student life very pale, so much so, indeed, that he was called in college "the walking spook." His mind was exceedingly active, with a most vigorous mental appetite. He was not insensible to the danger of over-exertion of the brain, and not unfrequently alluded to it as an apprehended cause of his premature death.

His friend, Dr. Hudson, of White Plains, to whom I am indebted for all the facts and many of the expressions in this sketch, as well as those of Drs. Arnold, Adams, and others, says: "To Dr. Roe it was indeed a painful self-denial to keep from close study and deep thought. We seldom met him, or spent the latest hours of the night with him, (a privilege we availed ourselves of as frequently as circumstances would permit, for our own profit,) but he had some new idea, some new train of thought, some new theory, or practical suggestion or experience; it was impossible to be with him an hour without learning something new and useful. It was his delight both to elicit and communicate facts and observations, the results of experience."

In the commencement of his practice he was not well received, owing partly to the popularity of his respectable partner; perhaps, also, to the circumstance of his unprepossessing address, and want of knowl-

edge of all the little amenities that pertain to the social circle. But observation and a brief experience soon put him in the vantage-ground, when he enjoyed the unlimited confidence and esteem of the whole community in which he lived and labored.

Dr. Roe's case-books, and the marginal and foot notes in all the works he read, attest his diligence and good sense. At one time he conceived the idea, laid his plans, and commenced the work of writing a treatise on the practice of medicine; the cares of an increasing family and an extensive practice so completely engrossed his time that he abandoned the project.

He almost envied the city physicians the great opportunities which they *can* enjoy; but his health forbade his removal from the country.

For many years he availed himself of the practice of the county almshouse, as a school of observation. The miserable and otherwise homeless and hapless patients of that institution felt that in him they had a faithful, skillful, and kind physician and friend. He was eminently accurate in diagnosis, and happy in the adaptation of means to ends. His mechanical resources, as applied to surgery, are well exemplified in the construction of a fracture apparatus, which was a decided improvement on Amesbury's splint, in the opinion of those who have made use of it. The following resolutions were unanimously passed at the annual meeting of this Society, June 6th, 1848, on motion of Dr. P. Stewart:

"Whereas, since our last Annual Meeting, there have been removed from us by the hand of a wise, yet mysterious Providence, in the vigor of manhood and professional usefulness, two of our most worthy and esteemed professional brethren: therefore,

"Resolved, That with feelings of the profoundest sorrow, we record the death of Drs. Livingston Roe and Joseph M. Scribner; and that their absence from our meeting to day recalls to our minds their cheerful and manly countenances, as they have met with us on former occasions like this, and boldly maintained the dignity and honor of our profession by discountenancing all forms of empiricism on the one hand, and by their efficient advocacy of established principles of practice on the other, and by the liberal spirit of improvement which they manifested in all the departments of medical science, and which led Dr. Roe to invent a most valuable surgical splint, for which he deserves the thanks of the profession."

As an evidence of the extent to which Dr. Roe's splint had been used, and the favorable opinion entertained of it by the profession, I have extracted from the minutes of the meeting of this Society, held in

Sing Sing, June 6th, 1843, the following resolution, which was, on motion of Dr. James Fountain, unanimously adopted:

"Resolved, That the mass of the members of the Medical Society of this county, having used the apparatus for fractures of the extremities, invented (or materially improved) and presented to the profession by Dr. L. Roe, consider it as decidedly superior to anything of the kind ever offered to the public; this resolution to be signed by the President and Secretary of this Society, and presented to Dr. Roe, for his disposal."

Dr. Roe's literary character was respectable; he delivered several well-composed public addresses. On one occasion he delivered a Fourth of July oration, which was so highly appreciated as to merit publication. His remains were deposited in the yard of the Episcopal Church in White Plains.

A few days after his death a public meeting was convened, at which resolutions were passed and addresses made, expressive of the bereavement of the community.

His was an example worthy of the imitation of every member of this or any other medical society.

DR. ELISHA BELCHER, a former practitioner of this county, though not a resident of it, was born in the town of Preston, (now Lebanon,) New London County, Ct., in the year 1757. He received a good classical education, after which he engaged in the study of medicine and surgery. His preceptor's name I have been unable to obtain. Before he had finished his medical education, he joined the Continental Army, and soon received the appointment of surgeon's mate; after two years' service in this capacity, he was promoted to the rank of surgeon, and stationed at Greenwich, Fairfield Co., Ct., near the New York State line, where he continued to practice his profession until within one year of his death. He died of hydrothorax, in December, 1825, in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

Dr. Belcher was eminent in his profession; he was frequently called as counsel to remote towns as far north as Poughkeepsie. His opinion was valued by both patients and physicians; he was a man of few words, but they were well considered. He was a man below the medium stature and size. He was present at the battle of Brooklyn Heights, at the burning of Danbury, and at the battle of White Plains.

His practice was full three-fourths in Westchester County; he resided within a mile or two of the State line. He educated not less than twelve or fourteen young men to the medical profession, including his two sons, Dr. Elisha R. Belcher, of New York City, and Dr. William N. Belcher, of Sing Sing, N. Y.

Dr. Belcher had two sons and seven daughters, who seemed to have had a strong inclination for the medical profession, or at least for its members. His third daughter married Dr. Darius Mead, of Greenwich, Conn., a former student of Dr. Belcher. His fourth daughter married Dr. Stephen Fowler, of North Castle, and, after his death, married Dr. Henry White, of Yorktown. His fifth daughter married Dr. David Palmer, of White Plains. His seventh daughter married Dr. Bartow F. White, son of Dr. Ebenezer White, of Somers, and grandson of Dr. Ebenezer White, of Yorktown.

DR. CLARK SANFORD, of Greenwich, Conn., also deserves mention, although, like Dr. Belcher, he was not a resident of our county; yet the greater part of his practice was on this side of the Connecticut State line, living within one mile of Westchester County.

Dr. Sanford was a native of Vermont; he practiced in this county for thirty years. He was extensively known to the profession of his day as the manufacturer of pulverized Peruvian Bark, which was considered to be a superior article, and sold under the name of "Sanford's Bark," for one dollar per pound, while the ordinary bark brought only one-half this price. It was neatly put up in paper boxes, in quantities from one-half a pound to five or more pounds.

His mill for grinding medicines was located at "Byrom Mills," a place now known as Glenville; his sons greatly increased the business of grinding medicines after the death of their father. This was nearly the first establishment for the purpose in this country, and proved very lucrative to his son John, who continued the business.

Dr. Sanford was a bold practitioner of both medicine and surgery. He enjoyed a much more than ordinary reputation as a surgeon, being discreet and conservative, yet decided, prompt, and skillful. He educated his eldest son, Josephus, to the profession, who was a young man of great promise; he settled at the South, and died after a few years' residence there. His third son, Henry, is a very respectable apothecary in New York City.

Dr. Sanford was afflicted with a very peculiar idiosyncrasy. An infinitesimal quantity of pulverized ipecacuanha would affect him seriously; he could not carry it about him, or in his saddle-bags, even with every precaution to prevent its escape into the air. It produced an asthmatic affection, analogous to the hay asthma of English medical writers. His susceptibility was so delicate that he could detect its presence by the slightest particles that were floating in the atmosphere, although imperceptible to the senses of all others; he of course avoided its presence with peculiar care. He was a very eccentric man, an inveterate smoker, and had the habit of always carrying his long tobacco-pipe either in his mouth or in his boot-leg. His hair was always dressed in a cue. He is said to have been, like too many medical men of his day, the especial terror of all children. Even in our own days, the doctor is not unfrequently made the object of dread to all juvenile evil-doers; a threat to send for him is often equivalent to "calling spirits from the vasty deep."

Dr. Sanford died about the year 1820, aged over sixty years, having had three sons and two daughters.

Dr. JOHN INGERSOLL, of Yonkers, was born about the year 1745; the exact place of his nativity or the precise time of his settlement in the town of Yonkers cannot be determined. Mr. Ebenezer Baldwin, an old resident of the town, says he knew Dr. Ingersoll in 1804, when he (Mr. B.) first moved into Yonkers. At that date there were but fourteen or fifteen families within what are now the corporate limits of the village; there was a scattered farming population throughout the township, whose borders were the same as at present. Dr. Ingersoll lived then, and until he died in 1828, on a place about three miles northeast of the village. When he first knew him, he was "a big, portly, good-looking man," and "a fine social man," free from bad habits, a good neighbor and excellent citizen; at this time he seemed to be about forty years old. He was then the only physician in the town, and rode from King's Bridge to Chatterton's Hill, in the outskirts of White Plains; he enjoyed the reputation of "a good family doctor, but no surgeon." "Didn't want, and wouldn't attend surgical cases, if he could help it." Mr. Baldwin says he has seen many cases of very bad surgery come from under the care of Dr. Ingersoll. His obstetrical practice was very extensive. He was a man who invariably discountenanced consultations, and generally avoided inter-

course with his professional brethren. He is said to have been very attentive to his patients; the darkest night, the most pitiless storm, was never used as an excuse for not attending to the wants of suffering humanity. About the year 1815 he unfortunately became addicted to habits of insobriety, which increased upon him until his death in 1828. He was an American, and, with his wife, came from the vicinity of Horseneck. They had no children. As is too frequently the case with physicians, he was careless in charging and "easy" in collecting his accounts, consequently left very little property, except the mere "place" on which he lived so many years.

After Dr. Gates settled in Yonkers, Dr. Ingersoll's practice was very much abridged, which, it is said, rendered Dr. G. no special favorite of Dr. Ingersoll.

Dr. Gates says, that when he came to Yonkers, in the year 1824, he found Dr. Ingersoll an old man, being nearly seventy years of age. He thinks it would be difficult to establish for him the fact of having ever received a good professional education. He was "a bungling surgeon and a poor bleeder." He, however, enjoyed a good reputation in the treatment of typhoid pneumonia, which prevailed epidemically in 1813-14: his practice was not to bleed, or in any way to deplete, but to sustain the vital powers by tonics, stimulants, and diet. He probably published nothing of his long experience and observation. He died in August, 1827, of delirium tremens, and was believed to be about seventy-three years old. Dr. Ingersoll and his wife were both buried in the church-yard of St. John's Chapel at Tuckahoe; not even the rudest headstone marks the place of their interment.

Dr. J. Foster Jenkins, of Yonkers, kindly obtained above facts.

DR. DAVID ROGERS, JR., of Mamaroneck, was the son of Dr. David Rogers, (not Rodgers,) of Fairfield, Conn., and had descended from a long line of distinguished physicians of that name in Connecticut.

Dr. David Rogers, Jr., commenced practice in Mamaroneck before the year 1800. His brother, Dr. Charles Rogers, settled in Savannah, Georgia, about the same time, or shortly after. I have been unable to obtain much exact information in relation to his life; he is reported to have been a physician of eminence, and enjoyed an extensive practice. He was famous as an exterminator of worms, and treated all the verminous children in the region; what special anthelmintics he administered has not been left to the knowledge of posterity. Dr. Moulton states, that when inquiry was made of Dr. Rogers as to the peculiar

article or combination he employed so successfully as a vermifuge, he replied, in his characteristic style—"Pink and damnable doses of physic."

His father, Dr. David Rogers, moved from Fairfield, where he had practiced for many years, into Rye, about the year 1810, where he spent the remainder of his days, but never engaged in the practice of his profession.

Dr. David Rogers, Jr., had two sons, whom he educated for the profession of medicine—Drs. David L. and James Rogers, of New York City. The doctor was President of the Westchester County Medical Society for several years, from 1817 to 1820, about which time he removed to the City of New York. While in the country, it is said he was a Presbyterian, but soon after his removal to the city he adopted the plain garb of the Quaker, attended "meeting" instead of "church," and, as a result of his change of faith and garments, he soon found many "friends," who became likewise his patients. He died about the year 1843 or '44, aged nearly seventy.

DR. ISAAC GILBERT GRAHAM, of Mount Pleasant, was a son of Dr. Andrew Graham, and born in Southbury Parish, Woodbury, Conn., September 10th, 1760. He studied medicine under the guidance of his father, who was a physician in good standing, and son of the Rev. John Graham, A.M., a native of Edinburgh, Scotland, a descendant of the Duke of Montrose, and a graduate of the University of Glasgow.

Dr. Isaac G. Graham, the subject of this sketch, was at an early age appointed assistant surgeon in the American Revolutionary army, under General Washington, at West Point, whose warm regard he possessed, for his medical knowledge and patriotic devotion to the great cause which engaged their united energies. He was present at several important engagements with the enemy. When he retired from the army, it is said he received from his superior officers the highest proof of their respect and esteem for his alacrity and fidelity in the performance of his military duties.

At the age of twenty-four years he married Auley Bancker, and settled at Unionville, where he commenced the practice of medicine in this county, which he successfully prosecuted for nearly half a century, and until the infirmities of old age compelled him to relinquish all active duties.

After the passage of the Pension Act by Congress, he received the sum of \$440 per annum, for his services in the army. His business in the earlier part of his life was extended over a large tract of country, which he was always ready and prompt to attend, being considered very skillful in the treatment of what was then called the winter fever and small-pox; he was much respected by the poor, towards whom he ever manifested a spirit of benevolence and charity.

During some seasons he practiced inoculation for small-pox to a great extent, and made it quite a lucrative business. It is said he made \$1,400 in one season from this practice alone; he of course had but little or no confidence in the prophylactic virtues of vaccination.

With steadiness of purpose and regularity of life he combined an incorruptible integrity, which secured for him through life unlimited confidence and an unblemished fame. He died as he had lived, a sincere and humble believer in the Christian faith, on the first of September, 1848, aged eighty-eight years.

In his personal appearance he is said to have been a little above the medium stature, rather slender, his countenance strikingly intellectual, with rather sharp features. He educated his son Frederick to the medical profession, who is now in practice in Indiana.*

DR. STEPHEN FOWLER, of New Castle, was born in Orange County, N. Y.; he practiced in New Castle, in this county, about eight years; his popular and professional reputation were extremely good. His practice was very extensive, and he was one of the few who have been able to accumulate money by an honest practice of medicine, especially in the rural districts. But he was not permitted to live to enjoy the benefits of his earnings; he died about the year 1814, at the early age of thirty-five years.

Dr. Joshua W. Bowron was a student of his, and, after the death of his preceptor, located himself in the immediate vicinity of Dr. Fowler's office.

Dr. Stephen Fowler died of typhoid pneumonia, which was prevailing epidemically at the time. I regret my inability to procure any further information of the subject of this brief sketch.

* I am under obligations to my friend, Dr. Haight, of Pleasantville, for this interesting sketch.

DR. JOSHUA W. BOWRON, of New Castle, was the son of William and Mary Bowron, who emigrated from England and settled in this country soon after the Revolutionary war.

Dr. Bowron was born in the town of Washington, Dutchess County, in April, 1788. He pursued his medical studies under the care of the late Dr. Stephen Fowler, of this county. He attended the medical and surgical lectures of the Barclay Street College, where he also received the degree of Doctor in Medicine. At that time the Barclay Street Medical College was the only medical institution in the State of New York, and enjoyed a high and deserved reputation. Dr. Bowron commenced the practice of his profession about two miles and a half southeast of the village of Sing Sing, residing on a farm now owned by Peter Titler.

He had not practiced in this place but two or three years before his preceptor, Dr. Stephen Fowler, died, and by the request of many of the most respectable citizens of New Castle, he was induced to locate in the neighborhood, and occupy the field of practice left vacant by the death of Dr. Fowler, in which place he continued to practice until disease compelled him to abandon his labors.

When about sixty-two years old he had an attack of apoplexy, which left him with a partial paralysis of one side of the body. Six months after this attack he gave up his practice, which he had unremittently followed for nearly forty years. The apoplectic seizures recurring frequently, were followed by a deplorable state of weakness of both body and mind. He was reduced to a complete mental wreck, unable to even feed or dress himself; he was dependent upon the constant care of his excellent and devoted wife, who is still living to mourn his loss, and the melancholy termination of his useful career.

Dr. Bowron was elected President of the Westchester County Medical Society in 1848, and re-elected in 1849, but was not present at the meetings of the Society at either session. I am not aware that he ever contributed anything to medical literature.

No private practitioner ever enjoyed a wider field of practice, or a longer list of ardent, admiring, and confiding friends. His practice was only limited by his Herculean powers of endurance, which at last gave way under the severe demands of so extensive and so arduous a practice. A love for his profession, with the soul of the good Samaritan, and unbounded kindness, were his incentives to action. Long will his memory live, cherished by his numerous living friends, and the simple history of his life be transmitted to the rising generation as a beautiful example of a benevolent gentleman and a kind physician.

Though engaged in a very arduous country practice, Dr. Bowron found time to read the current literature of the profession. He possessed a very good medical library, which exhibited evidence of extensive use; he also received and read one or more medical journals. He accumulated a competency by his practice, and carried on the various branches of agriculture upon the beautiful farm which he possessed in New Castle, at which place he died, on Friday, the 20th day of February, 1857, in the sixty-ninth year of his age. His brother, Dr. John S. Bowron, is a very respectable physician in New York City.

I have not learned the number of students of medicine he had under his charge, or the names of any except Dr. Joshua Fowler, of Pleasantville, Dr. James Woolsey, of North Castle, and his brother, Dr. John S. Bowron, of New York City.

Dr. JOSEPH M. SCRIBNER, of Tarrytown, was born in Bedford, in this county, May 11th, 1793.

He pursued his medical studies with Dr. William H. Sackett, of that place. He attended the lectures of what was styled "The Medical Institution of the State of New York." A parchment certificate of his attendance I find, dated Session of 1815-16, and signed by Drs. John Watts, Archibald Bruce, Alexander H. Stevens, Thomas Cock, John Griscom, and Robert Bayard.

During this session he also attended the clinical lectures of the New York City Hospital, as his certificate shows. He received a diploma as licentiate of the Westchester County Medical Society, dated April, 1817, and signed by Dr. David Rogers, Jr., President, and Dr. William H. Sackett, Secretary.

Dr. Scribner commenced practice about two and a half miles south-east of Sing Sing, near the place where Dr. Bowron first settled; he remained there but one year, married a Miss Ward, and removed to Bedford, where he remained but one year; he then changed his location to within one and a half miles of Tarrytown. He continued to practice in this place for about fifteen years. In 1835 he removed into the village of Tarrytown, where he continued to reside and attend to the duties of his profession up to the time of his death, which occurred December 28th, 1847.

He died of typhoid fever, contracted at the Alms-House, where he was in attendance upon a number of severe cases, in connection with

Dr. Roe, of White Plains, who also fell a victim to the same disease a few days after the death of Dr. Scribner.

Dr. Scribner died at the age of fifty-four. His mortal remains find a resting-place in the cemetery connected with the celebrated "Old Dutch Church" of Tarrytown.

He educated his eldest son, James W. Scribner, to the profession. He was a highly respectable practitioner, but probably never contributed anything to the medical periodicals of his day. The resolutions passed by the County Society, as a tribute to his memory, jointly with that of Dr. Roe, will be found in the sketch of the latter.

DR. SETH MILLER, of Sing Sing, was born in April, 1766. He was originally from Lower Salem, from whence he settled in New Castle, where he practiced several years, after which, and before the year 1790, he settled in Sing Sing, being the first physician that ever located in that village. I have not been able to obtain much information of him except from an old lady, long a resident of Sing Sing, Mrs. John Miller, aged eighty-six years. She informed me that Dr. Miller attended her husband, who was sick with yellow fever, being the first and only case, up to that time, that had ever occurred in the place. It was prevailing in New York City at that time. Mr. Miller had been exposed a few days previous, while in the city on business. The disease did not spread, his being the only case.

Dr. Miller designed to educate his only son to medicine, but he soon evinced his entire disinclination for the healing art; therefore he "threw physic to the dogs," and directed his attention to some mechanical pursuit. The doctor's eldest daughter married Dr. Kissam, of New York; his second daughter, who is said to have been extremely beautiful and highly accomplished, married Dr. Wallace, of Troy, N. Y. She is said to have undertaken to continue her husband's practice after his death, having devoted much time to the study of medicine.

Dr. Stephen Silleck, of Sing Sing, was a student of Dr. Miller for one year and a half.

Dr. Miller was a man who was highly esteemed as a physician, and universally beloved as a kind friend and good citizen. He was gentlemanly and courteous in his manners, and extremely neat and genteel in his dress and personal appearance. He wore his hair done up in a club, according to the custom of the times, especially in vogue among pro-

fessional men. He is said to have been very skillful, and enjoyed the confidence of a large circle of friends and patients. While engaged in practice in New Castle, a wealthy and influential family of Quakers in his neighborhood had never called upon him professionally, from an erroneous impression that he was haughty and proud. One day, in passing their house, he stopped to ask for a drink of water, and seeing some very fine loaves of rye bread, warm from the oven, he very courteously begged them to present him a loaf, at the same time expressing his fondness for that kind of bread. Of course, his request was cheerfully complied with, and this little incident and simple act of familiarity forever after secured the friendship as well as patronage and influence of this excellent family.

Dr. Miller's health began to fail several years before his death, and being unable to attend to his extensive practice, he invited Dr. Jeremiah Drake Fowler to settle in Sing Sing, and participate in, and eventually succeed him in his practice. Dr. Miller died two or three years after the arrival of Dr. Fowler. This event occurred November 23, 1808, in the forty-second year of his age, his disease being jaundice. He was interred in the cemetery at Sparta, below Sing Sing.

DR. HOWARD LEE, of Sing Sing, son of the Dr. Lee famous as the compounder of the celebrated "Lee's Anti-bilious Pills," practiced in that place previous to the year 1838. Little is known of him, except that he is said to have been very intemperate.

DR. JEREMIAH DRAKE FOWLER, of Sing Sing, was the son of Reuben Fowler and Martha Drake, who were among the pioneer settlers of Westchester County. He was born the 28th day of December, 1785, in the village of Peekskill, where his parents resided during the Revolutionary war. His father was about the last to flee from the village on that memorable occasion, when the British, having landed at Verplanck's Point, marched into the town, and after having driven out the inhabitants and destroyed some Continental stores, departed, having spent a few hours in sacking the place. Dr. Fowler's parents left Peekskill in 1788, and resided in East Chester until 1798, when they removed to Fishkill. At an early age they gave him the best classical training of the day, with a view to his entering the

medical profession, which he did in the twenty-second year of his age, being the year 1806; having pursued his studies with the elder Dr. Drake, of Peekskill, and attended full courses of lectures at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, in New York City, under J. Augustine Smith, David Hosack, John Griscom, and others.

He settled in Sing Sing (says his son, Dr. Theodore Fowler, to whom I am indebted for the greater portion of this sketch,) immediately after receiving his degree, at the suggestion of Capt. Hunter, a connection of his residing there, where he labored most successfully until his death, which occurred in the forty-third year of his age, on the 28th of October, 1828. He died of congestion of the brain. During that period none ranked higher in his profession; he is spoken of by the few friends who remain living, as an eminent and skillful physician. He was the intimate friend and cotemporary of Hosack, Post, Kissam, and the other shining lights of medicine in New York in that day. He was a prominent member of this Medical Society, and several times represented it as its delegate to the State Society.

He was a practical surveyor, and frequently acted in that capacity, making most of the surveys in his immediate vicinity.

He was elected Justice of the Peace, which was considered an honor in those days, and officiated in that capacity during the years 1817, '18, and '19; but his clemency in granting the limits, and being security, &c., well-nigh ruined him, financially.

He was a man of fine physical proportions and noble bearing; his disposition was amiable to a fault. It is said he had no enemies; the truth was, no man could quarrel with him, for if any came to him in ill-humor, a half dozen words from him sufficed to change their feelings. In the social circle he was peculiarly happy, in diffusing at all times a rich fund of humor and story, which so strongly characterized the social intercourse of the day in which he lived.

Dr. Fowler's universal amenity of manner, his professional skill, his social humor, all combined to endear him to a large circle of admiring friends, and render his loss in the meridian of life universally deplored.

Dr. Fowler educated to the profession his brother, Peter D. Fowler, who settled in Fishkill, N. Y., with whom his son, Theodore Fowler, now of the same place, pursued the study of the medical sciences.

Dr. DONAL, of Colaburg, now Croton Station, on the Hudson River, was a young man who engaged in the practice of medicine in that place, at the time of the prevalence of epidemic typhoid pneumonia, in 1814, and gained for himself an extensive reputation, by adopting the stimulating plan of treatment in that disease, with great success. Soon after he removed to New York, and died. The particulars of his life and character I have been unable to obtain.

Dr. LYMAN COOK, of Cortlandtown, was an eminent and successful physician. He is worthy of especial notice by us, having been chosen the delegate of this Society, which he represented by attending the first meeting of the State Medical Society in the year 1807.

He engaged somewhat in politics, and was once elected to the office of High Sheriff of the county. He removed to one of the Western States, where he located as a physician.

Dr. NATHANIEL DRAKE, of Peekskill, was born in the town of Yorktown, Westchester County, N. Y., on the 27th of August, 1763. He was a son of Judge Gilbert Drake, of that town, a descendant of John Drake, of the Council of Plymouth, who was one of the original company established by King James, in 1606, for the settling of New England.

Dr. James Fountain informed me that he studied medicine under the guidance of Dr. Peter Huford, of the same town; while Dr. P. Stewart writes me, that he studied with Dr. Ebenezer White, of Yorktown, a physician of great distinction in his day; perhaps they are both correct, as he may have studied with each. He attended medical lectures and dissections in New York City, and was one of the medical students who were obliged to flee for their lives from the mob which attacked the dissecting apartments, with a full determination to break up the school by violence. He commenced practice quite early in life, in his native town; in a few years, however, he removed to the village of Peekskill, where he continued to practice his profession until within about four months of his death, which occurred on the 1st of February, 1850, being in the eighty-seventh year of his age. Dr. Drake was a respectable practitioner for almost seventy years, under

various reverses of fortune, and at last died poor, and in rather an obscure manner.

He was a tall and well-proportioned man, of a decided bilious temperament, good-natured, and gentlemanly; it is said that no man rode more gracefully and elegantly on horseback than Dr. Drake, even in his extreme old age. With him expired the former splendor of the ancient family, not one being left to perpetuate even the name.

While in general practice Dr. Drake always had his fair proportion, it was in the obstetrical department that he especially bore off the palm. His natural kindness of heart and urbanity of manner secured to him the friendship and confidence of that class of patients, in the hour of their most imminent peril. Dr. Stewart writes, that "no physician in this region of country has probably ever had so large an experience in this department of our profession;" his manner was mild and courteous almost to a fault, and where he failed to win by his profound knowledge and acquirements, he succeeded by these most excellent traits.

DR. SAMUEL STRANG, of Peekskill, was another of the physicians of the olden time. He was the son of Major Joseph Strang, a Revolutionary hero. The true family name is L'Estrange, which has been corrupted to Strang. They sprang from one of the French Huguenot families, whose descendants are now numerous in Yorktown, and comprise the most respectable and wealthy farmers of the town.

From Bolton's History of Westchester County I extract the following:

"From the genealogical table in possession of the Strangs, of Putnam, it appears that Daniel L'Estrange, and Charlotte, his wife, (daughter of Francis Herbert,) being Protestants, fled from the City of Paris, in the year of our Lord 1685, during the persecutions under Louis the XIV., and came to the City of London. He obtained a lieutenantancy in the guards of James the Second, King of Great Britain, and continued there until the year 1688, when with his wife he embarked for America, in company with a number of French Protestants, and arrived at the City of New York. From thence he went to New Rochelle, and subsequently removed to Rye. Daniel L'Estrange, who was born A.D. 1656, died at Rye, in this county, A.D. 1706. His will bears date the same year. The late Major Joseph Strang greatly distinguished himself in the batteaux service, during the old French war."

Dr. Strang was born in Yorktown, in the year 1766. He was a

student of Dr. Ebenezer White, of Yorktown, from whom he not only obtained his professional education, but also the hand of his only daughter.

He practiced his profession in the vicinity of Yorktown for a few years; he then located himself in Peekskill, where he spent the remainder of his days. He was a reputable physician, and a man of scrupulous honesty and unwavering integrity; he was tall and slender, of a sanguineous temperament, with a very piercing blue eye and extremely fair skin; he was not taciturn, but a man of quiet demeanor.

He had twelve children, six sons and a half-dozen daughters. One of his sons, Eugene J. Strang, he carefully educated to the medical profession; he practiced but one year, and died at the age of twenty-seven years, of cardiac disease. He was a young man of promise, being possessed of brilliant talents and extensive acquirements.

The second daughter of Dr. Strang married Dr. William N. Belcher, of Sing Sing.

Dr. Samuel Strang died of typhoid pneumonia, in December, 1831, at the age of sixty-five years.

DR. PETER HUGEFORD, of Cortlandtown, was probably the first regular physician in the northwestern portion of Westchester County.

He was an Englishman by birth and education, and was unquestionably an accomplished medical practitioner. He was certainly a gentleman of the decided English stamp, as can be seen by his full-length portrait which now hangs in an ancient parlor of his grand-daughter, Mrs. Betsey Field, a widow of over eighty years, residing near the village of Peekskill. In the same antiquated apartment hang the portraits of two or three of his brothers, haughty-looking, red-faced British officers, with their massive powdered wigs hanging over their shoulders. A doctor in those days was an important-looking personage. But, alas! the day of ruffled shirts, breeches, and knee-buckles of silver and gold, and shoe-buckles bedecked with precious stones, and huge curled and powdered wigs, and cues which would vie in length and beauty with those of China, has long since passed away; and now, in these modern days of degeneracy, not even the gold-headed cane is tolerated, and doctors, as well as professional men generally, are placed "in the roll of common men," and obliged to dress in threadbare broadcloths, in place of silken gowns. O! spirit of Hippocrates, Cel-

sus, and Galen, when shall thy votaries be restored to their ancient glory?

Dr. Hugeford had many students of medicine; he was an honorable and successful practitioner previous to the Revolution. Being a royalist, he retired to the British army when war was declared. His fine farm of two hundred acres was confiscated, and subsequently given by government to John Paulding, for his service as one of the three distinguished captors of Major André, the British spy.

A cherry-tree brought by Dr. Hugeford from England, and which he planted in his garden, is still standing on the premises, now owned by Jacob Strang; the tree bears a delicate, white, saccharine cherry, which by grafts, &c., have been widely disseminated.

This, says Dr. Jas. Fountain, from whom I obtained the materials of this, as well as several other sketches, is a kind of service that every physician can do, and thus confer a benefit on posterity, who can reap the *fruit* of his industry, which, as in this instance, may long outlive his name.

Dr. Hugeford was probably the most accomplished physician of his day in this country. Except the meagre sketch which has been given above, his biography, as far as can be ascertained, is lost.

DR. STANLY, of Cortlandtown, was cotemporary with Dr. Hugeford. He emigrated from Connecticut, and settled in Cortlandtown, at precisely what date is not known. His history is almost entirely lost. He was celebrated for his great caution; he carried with him his scale and weights, and at all times weighed carefully every dose of medicine he administered.

He had one son, whom he educated thoroughly to the medical profession. Young Dr. Stanly married the only child of Richard Currie, a wealthy farmer of this county. They united under the most auspicious and flattering circumstances. He died prematurely of brandy; his wife, of opium; leaving a large family, most of whom are in indigent circumstances. How often does the sun usher in a clear and beautiful morning, and set in a dark and lowering sky! Such was the morning of life of the accomplished young Dr. Stanly and his tenderly-bred wife, and such their sad fate, even before life's day had run half its allotted course.

DR. ELIAS QUEREAU, of Yorktown, was born in the City of New York; the precise date of his birth, however, I have been unable to learn. He pursued his medical studies under the care of Dr. Huggford, of Cortlandtown. During the early period of the Revolutionary war, he married in the City of New York, where he engaged in practice for a short time.

Owing to the unsettled state of the country, it is said he frequently changed his residence and field of practice. Being a royalist, he embarked for St. Johns, Ca., with other royal refugees; he soon returned to his native State, in consequence of the extreme inclemency of the Canadian climate. Dr. Quereau finally settled in Yorktown, in this county, which was the native place of his wife, where he continued to reside during the remainder of his life. We are informed that the doctor changed his location fourteen times.

In Yorktown he seems to have commenced anew. He joined the Baptist denomination, and became an active member. With a few others he built a church, which, under the charge of Elder E. Fountain, was a prosperous society, and it was kept together forty years by their united aid, and continues to the present time. During all this long period Dr. Quereau practiced medicine successfully, and with much credit to himself.

He was a modest, quiet, and unassuming man, and a pious, consistent, and benevolent Christian. His Sunday earnings he invariably set apart for the benefit of the Church, believing that, as his duties on that sacred day were labors of love and necessity, he had no right to appropriate the avails thereof to the common purposes of life. He argued that, as they were obtained by the use of the Lord's time, they must, of necessity, be devoted to the advancement of His kingdom. A most noble example, which it would doubtless be well for more of his professional brethren to follow.

His life as a physician, though laborious, was truly a happy one; so calm, so mild, so obliging, that he had no enemies. The venerable Dr. James Fountain says, although living in his neighborhood many years, he never heard a word uttered by any man against Dr. Quereau!

"In misery's darkest cavern known,
His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless Anguish pour'd his groan;
And lonely Want retir'd to die.

"No summons mock'd by chill delay,
No petty gain disdain'd by pride,
The modest wants of ev'ry day
The toil of ev'ry day supplied.

"His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void ;
And sure th' Eternal Master found
The single talent well employ'd."

He died in his eighty-sixth year, leaving several children and many friends to lament his loss.

In the simple narrative of this man we have an example as impressive and as worthy of imitation as any handed down to us by history. Living in an humble sphere, and in a somewhat obscure locality, his many virtues, and the esteem with which he was regarded throughout a long life, are as worthy of record, and the example as impressive to the rising generation, as that of an individual in the most elevated position within the gift of a multitude. Our country and our profession may well feel proud of a character like that of Dr. Quereau.

DR. EBENEZER WHITE, of Yorktown, was the son of Rev. Ebenezer White, of Southampton, L. I. He was born in the lower part of Westchester County, in the year 1744. He settled in Yorktown a short time before the Revolutionary war, and took a deep interest in that important struggle. He was also much interested in politics and religion, doubtless at a sacrifice of progress in the study of medical science. He carried his library mainly in his head and saddle-bags, and practiced only a routine course through life. In politics he was so successful as to be elected State Senator for one term. In religion he also figured conspicuously. Belonging to the Old School Presbyterian Church, he, with the pastor, one Silas Constant, a shrewd Yankee, undertook to change the government to the Congregational form, but failing in this, they retired, carrying off the records of the old church; they erected a new house, about half a mile from the old one; this little offshoot is still in existence.*

Dr. White died March 8th, 1825, aged eighty-one years, leaving a large family of sons and daughters.

"Dr. White, of Yorktown," says Mr. Bolton, in his History of this county, "through the whole course of the Revolution sustained the character of a patriot, with that devotion and firmness which characterized the many at that eventful period of our history. It appears

* Dr. James Fountain, of Jefferson Valley, furnished the above statement.

that the enemy made several unsuccessful attempts to capture this distinguished individual. On one occasion they were desirous of exchanging the doctor for a British surgeon then in the hands of the Americans. To effect his surprisal, a large party of light horse were dispatched to Crompond, with strict orders to surround his dwelling, and make him prisoner. Some kind friend, however, gave the doctor timely warning, which enabled him to escape.

"As a substitute they seized upon Dr. James Brewer, who resided in the immediate neighborhood, and were proceeding home with their prisoner, when, passing through Stoney Street, they were fired upon by a party of Americans who lay concealed behind the fences. Dr. Brewer received a mortal wound, and expired the next morning, Nov. 20th, 1780, in the arms of Dr. White, who had thus narrowly escaped the melancholy fate of his friend. It deserves to be mentioned that he was the only one wounded of the party. Dr. Brewer, who had thus perished at the early age of thirty-nine, was a native of Massachusetts, and left by his wife, Hannah Brewer, four sons and three daughters. His grandson is the present Dr. James Brewer, of Peekskill." (I have been unable to learn anything of Dr. Brewer here referred to.)

"Ebenezer White, M.D., died 8th day of March, 1825, leaving issue, besides Henry above mentioned, Bartow; Dr. Ebenezer, of Somerstown, (for many years surrogate of the county, and a member of Assembly;) Lewis, of Peoria; James, Theodosius, of Somers, and a daughter Catharine."

DR. BENJAMIN BASSETT, of Peekskill. The following sketch is from the *Highland Eagle*, of April 10th, 1858, published in Peekskill. It was written by Rev. D. L. Marks, of the M. E. Church of that village, and given as an address at the funeral of the deceased.

We are called in the providence of God, as a community, to the mournful duty of committing to the grave the mortal remains of one long and favorably known among us. It seems to us fitting that on such an occasion there should be made a brief record of the man. This duty has devolved on me. For many of the facts I am about to present in this hasty sketch I am indebted to a member of the Medical Faculty, viz., Dr. Lee, of this village.

Dr. Bassett was born in Derby, Conn., December 6th, 1784. He graduated at Yale College, in 1807, in the twenty-third year of his age. His medical education was prosecuted under the most favorable circumstances of the times. He received the instructions of the professors of

the University of Penn, located in Philadelphia. The celebrated Drs. Rush, Physic, and Dorsey were among his medical instructors. Here he was honored with the degree of Doctor of Medicine.

Soon after he graduated as a physician, he began the practice of his profession in Delaware County, in this State.

Afterward he removed to Oswego County, where he continued his practice in a sparse population, until about the year 1826, when he removed to Yorktown, in this county, where he practiced medicine successfully about three years. He removed to Peekskill in 1829. From that date he has lived and practiced medicine in our midst, endearing himself to a large number of friends and families, until the 21st day of March, 1858, when, as the shades of the Sabbath evening came upon us, he quietly sank into the arms of death, and his spirit passed to the eternal world.

He is reported to have borne the most "kind and fraternal deportment towards all the junior members of the profession, and to have been free from the slightest tinge of jealousy or ill will, and ever ready to excuse or overlook what others might have considered as an infringement on his rights or interests." His intercourse with all the members of his profession is said to have been marked with "kindness and courtesy." Hence, "he had few if any enemies among medical men."

The estimation in which he was held by the profession was evinced by his election in 1846, and also in 1847, to the honorable position of President of the "Westchester County Medical Society." In the latter year he delivered an address before the Society as their president, "On the laws of epidemics as exhibited in those that had prevailed in the county the preceding twenty years." This was so highly appreciated by the Society that it was published by their order. It is still preserved in a medical work, vol. ix. of the first series of the *New York Journal of Medicine*, p. 183, and is worthy of the place it occupies. It is classical in style, rich in facts, abounds in experience, and every line evincing the closest habits of thought, and a highly discriminating mind united with his characteristic humility and self-depreciation. As he stood before the Society as their president to address them, the first sentence he uttered assured them of his courtesy and humility, so generally characteristic of true greatness. "Gentlemen," said he, "if you have expected from your president to-day a learned treatise on any branch of medical science, you will be disappointed. We all enjoy in common the same facilities for acquiring medical knowledge, and many of you probably improve these facilities more than I do." We transfer the brief introduction to that address

to this sketch, because it is so perfectly characteristic of the man. Men of real merit are generally men of true humility. Such a man was our esteemed friend, Dr. Bassett.

Dr. Bassett merited and occupied a prominent position as a physician. A member of the medical profession remarked of him: "That he was a close observer both of the phenomena of disease and of the effect of medicine. He had great confidence in the recuperative power of nature, and accordingly resorted to no harsh or purturbating remedies, but when promptness and decision were demanded, he was not wanting." During the greater portion of his life his vigorous mind was given to the study of disease, and his time was largely occupied with visiting the sick and watching over his patients. He possessed more than ordinary skill in his profession.

There was a rich and noble benevolence which strongly marked his character. The gratification of doing good seemed to be a much higher compensation for untiring labors by day and night than any other which he received. His services were as cheerfully rendered to the poor as to the rich, and often, like the healing gifts of Christ, they were without money and without price. Many are the grateful testimonies given of this fact, and there are among us not a few who have lost in his death an invaluable friend.

He would have accumulated a much larger patrimony for those whom he has left on earth, had he followed his profession as a mere money-making trade. But his was a mind and a heart that could rise above all sordid and mercenary motives, and he has left his memory engraved on many grateful hearts. His friends and family have received, and will keep as a precious treasure, this rich legacy of a *good name* and *worthy example* left them.

One of his prominent traits of character was that of closely investigating any subject that was presented to his attention, before coming to any decision concerning it. Hence he was never hasty nor rash in his decisions. This doubtless did much in making him a "cautious, careful and safe practitioner in his profession." He was such in the estimation of medical men, and in the estimation of the community generally.

Dr. Bassett was most emphatically a man of one work; and a man greatly devoted to that work. He gave his mind, his heart, and his time to his profession, and followed it very closely for the benefit of others. He was unwearied in his attentions to the sick, exhibiting in the sick room, where as a pastor we have often found him, patience, kindness, and sympathy to the afflicted; and when death baffled all his

skill, and claimed his patients as its victims, his sympathies were strongly manifested to the bereaved.

He seemed never to aim at any worldly display, or to reach a high standard of wealth, but to feel perfectly satisfied with a moderate competence. Hence, with great simplicity and singleness of heart, he pursued for nearly half a century his daily employment, a stranger to the corroding cares and anxieties of those who are in eager pursuit of wealth.

Though exposed to the inclemencies of weather, the frequent loss of sleep, and to irregularities of meals, with a feeble constitution, such were his habits of life, that he was rarely confined by illness, and it is believed never with serious disease. His last sickness seemed to be more the exhaustion of his vital powers, by long-continued labors, than by any special disease.

He literally exhausted life in the practical duties of his profession. Even when he had reached an age at which nature needed repose, he was frequently seen in great feebleness going to visit his patients, and found administering healing remedies to others, when he needed something to support sinking nature in himself. He seemed anxious to do good as long as he had any strength left. After often saving life, and often witnessing death in a great variety of forms, he yielded to the righteous decree of his God, and gathered up his feet in death. He closed his eventful life in his own residence, in the village of Peekskill, lamented by a grateful community, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. For several months his health declined, nature gradually yielded, and the light of his life was extinguished in a manner which rendered the last moment almost imperceptible. There lay his venerable form, silent and motionless. The angel had come, and the spirit had departed. There sat his aged companion, nearly overcome with grief, left almost alone, consoled by her sons and her Saviour and God. Friends were filled with silent grief. There was a solemn sadness where he had so long resided. Dr. Bassett had gone "to his long home."

In his last sickness he evinced great clearness of mind, and much close and serious thought on the subject of religion. His attention had previously been turned to this all-important subject, and at a former period of his life he is said to have sought the mercy of his God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. He wrote bitter things against himself because he had not come out openly, and in a more public manner; and at an early period of his life consecrated himself to God, and his influence to Christianity. He fully affirmed his faith in all the great

and glorious doctrines of the Christian religion. The immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body were referred to with great decision of faith, and much emotion of spirit.

These seemed especially to occupy his mind up to the very last hours of human consciousness. He most emphatically declared to us, and to others, that he had no hope except in Jesus Christ. He did not trust to his morality of life—to his long and sincere devotion to the interests of others—nor to any human dependencies, but only in the merits of the world's Redeemer. He made his own arrangements for his funeral, selected the place for his burial, and the clergymen whom he wished to address the living on the day of his interment; and when we promised him that these desires should be complied with, he spoke with great feeling and affection of his endeared and faithful companion, and of his children, whom he committed to the care of his Heavenly Father. He wished to be put in a plain coffin, and buried in a plain and Christian manner. Soon after receiving assurances that his wishes should be complied with, his speech failed, and he became unconscious of what was transpiring about him, and in a few hours passed away to the world of spirits.

I have also taken from the same paper of March 27th, the following eulogy, written by Prof. Chas. A. Lee, on the life and character of Dr. Benjamin Bassett: An aged and respectable citizen has gone from among us. Probably there is no reader whose eye this notice may strike but will feel that sadness and grief which spring from the loss of one in whom centers a strong personal interest, on learning that Dr. Benj. Bassett is dead. When we say that there is scarcely a family in our community which does not feel almost as if a member had been cut off, scarcely an individual who does not mourn for him as a departed friend—and that after more than a third of a century spent in the active duties of his profession in our midst, he yielded up his life to Him who gave it, without an enemy in the world—honored and loved by all classes of society—we need say but little more; these simple facts are nobler eulogies than any we can pronounce, for they stamp him as a good, useful and christian man.

Dr. Bassett belonged emphatically to the old school, New Englanders of a former generation, few of whom still survive as monuments of their time. Graduating at Yale College in 1807, a classmate of that grand old theologian, Dr. Taylor—both their minds partook of that rather solid than ornamental mould characteristic of those early days. Bound together by those peculiar and tender ties which knit kindred spirits in the formative process of a college course—that affec-

tion was as warm and fresh as when fifty years before they rode out from New Haven, each to launch for himself upon the troubled waters of everyday life—and bidding a sad good-bye to old associations and to each other—a scene which we have often heard Dr. Bassett describe—the future Doctor of Divinity turned back with tearful eyes and exclaimed, while the future physician, overpowered with emotion, echoed the sentiment, “thou dearest spot on this earth, may the memories which cluster around thee cling to us forever;” and these memories accompanying them thus through after years, it seemed fitting that when one had departed the other should follow to join him in the future world, there never to separate again. There were many points of resemblance between them—a kind, gentle and affectionate disposition—an abnegation of self—a love for all humanity—and a childlike simplicity threw an indescribable charm around each. Mr. Bassett’s innate modesty prevented him from acquiring any great notority, but did not circumscribe the sphere of his usefulness. His name will ever be cherished by those who came in contact with him, and whom he attended professionally during the long period of his practice in this place. No man ever enjoyed more implicitly the entire confidence of his patients. So great was this faith, that to many, simply his presence in the sick room inspired more of hope than any saving properties which all the medicine contained, and often have we known the sufferer to ascribe such efficacy to his skill and prudence that the very strength of the belief produced the result desired.

Not only to the homes of the prosperous did he carry hope and health, but to the poor and needy his services were as freely given as they were freely required, never asking or receiving for these labors of mercy anything more than that gratitude which was all that they had to bestow. He was a fine conversationalist, and possessed an exhaustless fund of humor, and an immense store of anecdote, which would lighten up the gloomiest apartment, transform the expression of pain into a merry smile, and cause the cheerless visage of the desponding to beam, in spite of every effort to repress it, with a cheerfulness which promised the speedy approach of better days and robust strength. These same qualities made him the life of a social circle, and one of those genial companions with whom an hour spent infuses a glow and warmth and good-will into the whole nature, which drives away all gloomy and misanthropic views, and makes one look with a pleased and kindly eye on everybody and everything. But besides his integrity, which was so pure in himself that he hardly suspected dishonesty in others—his single-mindedness, which caused him to form a straight-

forward and manly opinion on every subject—his most remarkable trait was a universal charity, which rendered him the most liberal of men. No one ever heard him express a harsh or ungenerous opinion of his neighbor; no one ever knew him hesitate to give ample credit where it was due; free from envy, he took delight in the success of others: towards his professional brethren he always expressed the highest regard; if it was a difficult and dangerous case, he was the first to propose a consultation, and whoever gained the glory, he appeared entirely satisfied if only the patient was saved. Thus kind and gentle, thoughtful for others, careless for self, a useful citizen, a valued friend, an unobtrusive Christian—full of years and of virtues, he has gone to his rest; sorrowfully we take leave of him in closing this imperfect tribute, but in our memory he is cherished forever.

Dr. P. Stewart, of Peekskill, says that Dr. Bassett wrote an article on Epidemic Dysentery and Intermittent Fever, which was published in the *N. Y. Medical Journal* for May, 1831, which shows the strong points of his mental character; it is a very valuable practical treatise. He also wrote about the same time, as I have been informed, some interesting articles on the effects of sulphate of quinine, but where they were published I cannot say. In his whole life he honored his profession, except perhaps in one particular, viz., in placing too low an estimate on the value of his medical services; his charges were so small that he was unable to live in a manner suitable to a man of his ability, skill and position. Until within the last few years of his life, he felt too poor to avail himself of the means of professional improvement that he desired, and ought to have had; and when his circumstances enabled him to secure these advantages, he was too far advanced in years to profit by them.

Dr. James Fountain, who enjoyed his acquaintance for many years, in a letter written to me some time previous to the death of Dr. Bassett, speaks of him as follows: "He was a well read and accomplished physician; he possessed a strong mind, well adapted to reasoning. Dr. Bassett's peculiarity was his excessive caution. I recollect once having been sent for to consult with him in a case of typhoid fever; I recommended a powder of camphor and opium; the doctor was delighted to hear the prescription, for he had already prepared the powder, and had held it between his thumb and finger three hours, fearing it was not quite safe to venture the opium.

"The doctor still lives, but he is going the way of all flesh, after securing the respect and esteem of the profession, and a multitude of acquaintances. His manner was ever unobtrusive and unostentatious."

In six weeks from the time the above was written, Dr. Bassett had departed "to that undiscovered country from whence no traveler returns."

DR. ELIAS CORNELIUS, of Somers, was a native of Long Island; he served in the capacity of surgeon's mate in the army of the American Revolution. After the close of the war, he settled in the western part of Somers, where he practiced his profession over forty years with eminent success and credit.

During the Revolution he contracted the habit of smoking, snuffing, and tipling, but, contrary to the generally received opinion, he was never intoxicated during his long and arduous life.

Dr. James Fountain says: "Dr. Cornelius was truly a pattern physician; with a very limited medical education, he commenced the active duties of his profession, but full of energy and ambition, he studied and practiced both by day and by night. He kept three good horses, and rode off rapidly, and on his arrival at home he gave his horse over to his groom, and went directly into his office, and there he spent all his available time in the pursuit of knowledge or in the compounding of medicines.

"He availed himself of every means of information; he commenced taking the first medical periodical ever published in America, viz., *The Medical Repository*, and ever continued to read it. He had also all the principal authors of his day, and studied them thoroughly. He very wisely avoided engaging in politics or any public matters, that are so apt to divert the attention of the professional man from the great objects of his calling. Having been inspired by a genuine love, with the requisite enthusiasm, for his profession, he gave it his undivided attention, and the whole force of his energies and talents were made subservient to it.

"He died at the age of sixty-eight years, having been blessed with a large family, which were carefully and respectably bred. One of his sons having been thoroughly educated, became one of the most celebrated and accomplished divines in the New England States.

"He commenced life like many of our profession, in extreme poverty; but honestly acquired what very few of the devotees of the healing art have been able to do, a competency—having left for his heirs an estate of nearly fifty thousand dollars."

DR. WILLIAM H. SACKETT was born at Greenwich, in Connecticut, in the year 1781. He was the second son of Justus Sackett, a farmer of that town. Dr. Sackett was a gentleman of thorough classical education, being a graduate of the literary department of Yale College. He pursued his medical studies under the care of Dr. Perry, of Ridgefield, in his native state. Dr. Nehemiah Perry, now of the same place, was his fellow student. He settled in Bedford in the year 1805 or '6, being full of youthful ardor and ambition; some three years after he married the daughter of Col. Jesse Holly, of that place. His mind was amply stored with the ancient and modern literature of the profession. He commenced his studies at an important era in medicine; a period of transition as it were; new and brilliant lights were just beaming upon the hitherto dark and obscure theories of medicine; Cullen, Brown, Darwin, and Rush were the leading spirits of the day. Dr. Sackett carefully studied these, and indeed all others of his time.

He was a man of extraordinary perseverance and industry; he pursued the special objects of his calling energetically, both day and night, and on all possible occasions. He possessed a strong mind, fruitful in resources, and was justly esteemed the most accomplished physician in the county. Uniting the several qualities of mind above mentioned with a thorough collegiate education, and a careful medical pupilage, he soon became a very popular physician, and was universally esteemed. It is probably not saying too much, that he was regarded, and still is in memory, as the pride of the profession in that portion of the county.

He was very prompt in business, and possessed a remarkably cheerful and fun-loving disposition. He rode on horseback, generally upon a gallop, and would never allow the messenger to arrive first at the house of the sick. His "gray mare" was as extensively known as himself. As every great military character, from Alexander the Great to General Worth, has had his favorite horse, which have received honorable mention in history, so should Dr. Sackett's "gray mare" be associated with his memory, as it is to this day at Bedford.

Dr. Sackett was the preceptor of the late Dr. Joseph Scribner, of Tarrytown, Dr. Mead, of Illinois, and the late Dr. Bailly, of Tarrytown. He possessed a nervo-sanguineous temperament; was tall and slender; his eyes large, blue and piercing. He loved his profession, and fell a sacrifice to it. The whole term of his practice in Bedford would not exceed fifteen years. He died December 29th, 1820, in the thirty-ninth year of his age. Alas! his ambition, his energy, his devotion to the profession which he so much loved, resulted in his prema-

ture death; he died in the prime of life, and in the midst of his usefulness.

I am indebted to Drs. J. Fountain and Shove for the materials of the above sketch.

DR. MATSON SMITH, of New Rochelle, was born in the year 1767, in Lyme, Connecticut. He died March 17th, 1845, in the 79th year of his age. The following is extracted from the published discourse of Rev. Gorham D. Abbott, on the funeral occasion of Dr. Smith. Mr. Abbott says: "In the course of his education he passed two years at Yale College, a classmate of the Rev. Dr. Nott, President of Union College. But his health failing, he returned home and studied medicine in his native village, with Dr. Samuel Mather. In 1787, at the early age of twenty, he came and settled in New Rochelle as a practicing physician. His father died when he was very young; and as he left his mother's home fifty-seven years ago, to fix his residence in this place, the richest patrimony he bore was a devoted Christian widow's blessing and prayers. He married for his first wife the daughter of his medical instructor, a branch of the family of that name so highly honored in the annals of New England. The names of Drs. Increase and Cotton Mather will be remembered as long as Howard University or the Churches of Christ in Boston have existence.

"Dr. Smith was a medical licentiate of the State of Connecticut, and for several years President of the Medical Society of Westchester County. His professional knowledge and skill were extensively known and highly appreciated by his medical brethren; and, in consideration of his standing as a medical practitioner, the Regents of the University of New York, some years since, conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine. For more than half a century he has been identified with the history of his town and county, not only in consequence of the widely extended practice to which he was called by his high professional attainments, his experience and skill, but by his interest and aid in whatever has affected the moral and religious interests of nearly three generations of inhabitants.

"He commenced his professional career by taking a marked and decided stand in respect to the observance of the Sabbath, of temperance, and of religion; and he lived to see in the history of his own family the happy fruits of his long course of uprightness, integrity, and piety.

"He filled many situations of responsibility, confidence and trust.

He has long been associated with the great, benevolent and philanthropic institutions of his day. The interests of the Bible, of the Sabbath, of temperance, of morality and religion in our own land, and in the uttermost parts of earth, have ever shared his labors, benefactions and prayers. Whatever has concerned the glory of God and the well-being of mankind, either for time or eternity, has found a friend in him."

Rev. Mr. Abbott, after giving a detailed account of Dr. Smith's religious experience and views in his last days and hours, describes his death as follows:

"Early in the forenoon of Monday he appeared in extreme distress. I said softly to him, 'Dr. Smith, if you still feel that all is peace, will you please to give us a sign?'

"He distinctly did, though the dying hand had scarcely life remaining to obey his will.

"In the afternoon every indication told that the end was near. His pulse was gone. The power of motion was gone. The hands and the head had assumed their last position. The eye had ceased to look around upon any earthly object; it was fixed and directed to Heaven. Every line and every feature of the countenance began to wear the similitude of death. All gathered around his bed to watch the termination of the conflict with the King of Terrors. I was requested once more to ask the question if he recognized us. I did so. There was no voice—no sign. He was in the midst of the Jordan. He was so far from *our* shore, that he could make no answer to our voice. We could only commit him to those arms which could bear him up amid the deepest waves, and receive him safely on the other side. At seven his spirit was with God.

" ' Night was his time for death,
When all around was peace,
Calmly to yield the weary breath,
From sin and suffering cease;
Think of Heaven's bliss, *and give the sign*
To parting friends. Such death be mine.'

Montgomery.

"Such were the closing days and final scenes of the life of our departed brother."

By my special request, Prof. Joseph Mather Smith, of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City, has prepared the following chaste and elegant notice of his father's professional life, which I shall

give entire. I hope it will not be thought that I have given undue length and prominence to the sketch of Dr. Matson Smith, when it is considered that he was one of the earliest and most distinguished of the physicians of the county, and took a special interest in this Society, being present, and having been elected Secretary of its first meeting in May, 1797. I would gladly give each of the sketches equal length, provided the lives of the individuals had furnished the materials for it, and that the facts and incidents could at this day be obtained.

Although Dr. Smith commenced his professional life at New Rochelle, at the early age of twenty, his success in business was extraordinarily rapid. Nor did he fail to enlarge his practice year by year, until it extended over most of the southern towns of the county. This almost unexampled prosperity seems to have resulted from his prepossessing personal appearance, his decision of character, his ingratiating address, and the rectitude of his moral and professional deportment. He was fortunate in early securing the respect and confidence of the more respectable and influential of the people among whom he had settled as a stranger, and especially of the physicians of the neighborhood. His prudence and discretion were displayed in refraining from actively participating in the exciting and often turbulent political strifes so common at the close of the last and the commencement of the present century. Decided and uniform in his political sentiments, a patriot by birth, of the New England school, he expressed his opinions with frankness, but in terms so respectful and void of offensiveness to his opponents, that he never alienated their friendly regard. While thus industriously performing his increasing professional duties, he enlarged the circle of his usefulness by aiding to advance the interests of popular education, not only in the elementary and solid, but in the higher and classical departments of learning. Nor was he slow in uniting in every project which tended to elevate the moral tone of the community in which he lived; a community which, originally composed mostly of Huguenots and Englishmen of orderly and religious habits, became sadly degenerated during the Revolutionary war. Such was especially the case throughout that portion of the county lying between the boundaries called the British and American lines, and known as the neutral grounds—a territory overrun by marauders and vagrants, and the scene of many bloody rencontres between the contending parties, and from which many of the best portion of the population voluntarily exiled themselves until after the return of peace. But the influence of Dr. Smith was exerted to promote the accomplishment of a higher purpose, and that was, such a reformation as Christianity alone can

effect. His endeavors directed to this end were attended with results as satisfactory perhaps as the circumstances of the times would permit.

As a profession, medicine was regarded by Dr. Smith, next to that of the Christian ministry, as the noblest of human pursuits. Its inherent dignity and benevolent attributes were to him transparent in all its aspects; and it was in the labors of such men as Boerhaave, Sydenham, Huxham, and Cullen that he recognized its diversified capabilities to minister to human happiness. These distinguished physicians he contemplated as models of what medical men should be; and by those who knew him well, it will not perhaps be thought too partial to say, that his conception of a virtuous, humane and enlightened physician was realized in his own character.

Residing in a country district, it was essential to his success that he attend alike to the several departments of practical medicine. Happily, it was not against his predilections that he became a general practitioner. Devoted to the practice of physic proper, obstetrics and surgery, it may perhaps be said, aside from some of the rarer and more delicate operations of surgery, which he referred to special experts, that he was equally skillful in these departments. With his experience enlarged by clinical observation, and his judgment matured by reflection, he became a ripe counsellor to his professional neighbors; and as such, he was the more esteemed on account of his courteous deportment, his respect for the opinions of his medical brethren, and his scrupulous care to avoid everything which, in utterance or action, might tend to lessen the confidence of a patient in the skill of his physician. In fact, so strictly and conscientiously were the principles of medical ethics observed by him, that no physician hesitated for a moment to meet him at the bedside of his patient. To young physicians of merit he was especially friendly, aiding them in difficult cases, in that kind and delicate manner which could not fail to inspire them with self-confidence, and give to their patients the assurance that their medical attendant was worthy of their regard.

The liberal and sagacious views of Dr. Smith, in respect to the hygienic and prophylactic relations of the medical art, were strikingly illustrated in his adoption of the practice of vaccination at a very early period after its introduction into this country. Convinced by his own experiments that the discovery of Jenner was the greatest boon conferred on humanity by medicine, he entered heart and hand into the work of diffusing its benefits in the community in which he lived, taking great pains to remove the doubts of those whose minds wavered in relation to its value. The practice of vaccination, through the agency

of Dr. Smith and a few of his contemporaries, soon became as general in the County of Westchester, as it did through the influence of Drs. Valentine Seaman, Mitchell, Miller, Post, Hosack, and other medical men in the City of New York. With these eminent physicians he had frequent professional intercourse, and with them he efficiently co-operated in the attempt to exterminate the variolous disease.

Though minute in his study of the ordinary endemic diseases of the southern parts of the county, and of which, if the writer remembers correctly, he gave an account in an annual address, delivered before the County Medical Society, Dr. Smith also carefully watched the modifications of disease, induced by atmospheric influences. The occurrence of new and rare forms of epidemic maladies quickly attracted his notice; and the one which, of all others, during his long professional career specially engaged his attention, was the epidemic or typhoid pneumonia, which prevailed in the Northern and Eastern States under various modifications, in 1811, '12, and '13, and which, in many places, was extensively prevalent and mortal. The annals of that distemper constituted no inconsiderable part of the original American medical literature of that period. To the stock of knowledge of the disease Dr. Smith contributed his mite, in a communication to Dr. Hosack, entitled "An Account of a Malignant Epidemic which prevailed in the County of Westchester, N. Y., in the summer of 1812;" a communication which was published by that gentleman in the third volume of the *American Medical and Philosophical Register*, of which he was the leading conductor. The sketch given by Dr. Smith of the prevalence of the epidemic, and of its symptomatology, peculiarities, and treatment, exhibits the clearness of his views regarding its nature, and of the remedies required in its treatment.

Among the physicians who took an active part in the first quarter of the present century in establishing and maintaining the Westchester County Medical Society, the subject of this memoir was one of the foremost. The efforts he made to advance the interests of the Society were not overlooked by his associates; and the proof that they were not so, was shown in his election to its presidency, an office he filled for many years; and it is well remembered that nothing which did not imperatively claim his attention, was allowed to prevent his attendance at its stated meetings. Such meetings were to him occasions of delightful intercourse with his professional brethren, and of profitable interchange of medical intelligence. And it must be added, that it was, without his solicitation, through the agency of this Society that, in 1830, he received from the Regents of the University of the State the honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine.

In his physical development, Dr. Smith was above the ordinary stature; and though rather delicate and valitudinary in his youth and early manhood, yet, after entering into active life, and forming habits, so far as his avocations would admit, the most conducive to health, he became muscular and robust; and with the exception of suffering occasional vertigo, and a few attacks of acute inflammatory and febrile disease, he enjoyed a high degree of health until within a year or two before his death. For upwards of thirty years he spent no small share of his time on horseback, traveling over hills and valleys, by day and by night, in heat and cold, in storm and sunshine, answering to every demand of duty, whether professional or otherwise. As old age approached, he, for the most part, exchanged the saddle for the carriage, and deemed it justifiable to abridge his labors, by generally declining to attend to the calls for his services at night. At a later period he felt the necessity of withdrawing from general practice, though he still maintained his position as a consulting physician. In his 77th year he began to experience, in addition to a troublesome constipation, which had existed for several years, a dysuria, which, after some months, was followed by a retention of urine—a condition from which relief was obtained only by instrumental means. This infirmity, so common in old age, gradually impaired his general health, and being recognized as an enlargement of the prostate gland, with the usual concomitant disorder of the bladder, was of course regarded as incurable. The natural progress of the disorder, and the irritation of the diseased parts, caused or exasperated by the necessary introduction of the catheter, gradually induced a collapse, which terminated his life on the 17th of March, 1845.

A brief sketch of his life, and a narrative of the calm, resigned, and devotional state of his mind as he approached the grave, was prepared and delivered as a funeral address, by his excellent friend, the Rev. Gorham D. Abbott, and which is preserved in his family, in print, as a worthy memorial of his professional and Christian character.

DR. STEPHEN ALLEN HART was born at Shrub Oak, Westchester County, New York, June 11th, 1820. He commenced the study of medicine under the direction of Dr. John Collett, in March, 1843. He is said to have pursued the study with much zeal and ardor. After having attended two full courses of lectures at the University Medical College, in New York City, he received the degree of M.D. in the spring of 1846.

He immediately entered upon the practice of his profession in Yorktown, in his native county, where he continued to reside until the time of his death, February 22d, 1849, æt. 29.

He left a wife and two children to mourn his premature death.

Dr. Hart gave promise of becoming a prominent member of his profession, possessing as he did all the requisites which should characterize the good physician—amiability, benevolence, intelligence, ambition, and integrity. But he failed to enjoy what it was his aim to secure to others, viz., health and longevity.

DR. GEORGE C. FINCH. The following biographical sketch of Dr. Finch was prepared by his friend and preceptor, Seth Shove, M. D., and read June 2d, 1857, before the Westchester County Medical Society, in accordance with a previous resolution.

It was referred to the committee of publication; in consequence of the committee not having continued the publication of their proceedings, this beautiful eulogy of Dr. Finch has remained in manuscript until the present.

Dr. Shove has kindly consented, with the approval of the committee, to permit it to be published with the other biographical sketches of deceased physicians of this county. This, and the sketches of Drs. Smith and Bassett, are rather more lengthy than the original design of these articles contemplated; yet, since the compiler has failed to obtain any information in relation to many physicians that have lived and died in this county, he felt justified in introducing a more extended biography of individuals where it could be furnished; also for the reason that, in either of the above specified cases, particularly the present, it would have been unjust to the author of the sketch to attempt its abridgment.

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

Upon the record of your Society's Transactions at its last annual meeting is found a resolution, requesting me to prepare a biographical sketch of the late Dr. Finch, one of our fellow members, to be read at this meeting.

To a knowledge on the part of the mover of that resolution, of my long and intimate acquaintance, and friendly social and professional relations with the deceased, I am probably indebted for the honor of submitting this brief sketch of our lamented friend and brother.

The gratification of responding to a sense of duty imposed by this relation, is mingled with regret of my inability to do justice to the memory of one thus fallen, ere he had arrived at the meridian of his usefulness; and whom, had such an event been my allotment instead of his, I should have considered it an honor to look upon, prospectively, as successor in my field of labor.

Dr. George C. Finch was born April 6th, 1817, at what is now Croton Falls, in the town of North Salem, Westchester County, N.Y., where his parents still reside, and where his father, Silas Finch, Esq., has long been known as a prominent and highly respectable citizen and magistrate. His mother was Sarah Crosby, daughter of the Hon. Darius Crosby, of Westchester County, for three years a member of the Lower House of the Assembly, and for four, of the Senate of this State. She is a lady of exalted worth, to whom the son was doubtless much indebted for his many excellent traits of character. They had but two children; the younger, a surviving daughter, who remains, the solace of her otherwise disconsolate parents, at her loved but saddened home.

In his rudimentary studies the doctor discovered early signs of a taste for learning; and his parents, possessed of ample means, resolved to spare no labor or expense in his education. At the age of ten he was placed at the grammar school of Mr. Minor, of South East, where he remained a considerable time, and was afterwards a member of the North Salem Academy, pursuing his studies with great diligence, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Jelliff. He was subsequently transferred to Mount Pleasant Academy, of which the Rev. Mr. Prime was principal, where he prepared for Union College, at which he graduated on the 9th of August, 1839, having sustained and ended his collegiate course in a manner which does him great honor. He was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, and if we may judge by an intimation derived from a private source, we should conclude that he was a favorite of the Faculty and Alumni of the Institution; certain it is that he enjoyed ever after a very enviable friendship and intimacy with persons of distinguished eminence, who were graduates of the same institution. To the ordinary classical attainments, he added a knowledge of the French Language.

Having elected the profession of medicine, and being thus prepared to study it with facility, he entered the office of the writer of this sketch, where he remained during his term of study, excepting that portion devoted to lectures at the Jefferson Medical College, at which he received the degree of Doctor of Medicine in the spring of 1841.

Being desirous of cultivating a professional acquaintance, and securing the instructions of the able professors of the institutions of his native State, he employed the spring term in the medical department of the University of the City of New York, and in the hospitals, &c., after which he returned to associate himself, for a time, with his first preceptor, in order to become familiar with the details of private practice.

Thus intellectually qualified to enter upon the active duties of a profession he seemed destined to honor, but of slender physical constitution, he yielded to the promptings of parental choice, and opened an office in his native village, in face of the oft-repeated saying, that "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country."

Here he found himself surrounded by a large circle of acquaintances and friends, who esteemed him for his moral and intellectual worth; but it required time to secure their entire confidence in this newly-acquired relation as their medical adviser.

In his early professional aspirations, it cannot be denied that the doctor desired to *shine*, but not in the dark shade which calumny might cast over the reputation of his neighboring physicians. He seemed only ambitious to acquire a reputation for usefulness, and to deserve that reputation. He sought real character, and laid the foundation in sincerity and upright intent. How well he succeeded, may be inferred from the fact that, as his medical abilities came to be appreciated, he gradually acquired a very respectable practice, and a large share of popular esteem, which he ever after enjoyed; both of which might have been increased indefinitely had his physical powers been equal to his mental capabilities. These facts are very creditable to the doctor, particularly as Croton Falls was a new field of labor, divided among old and established practitioners.

It is believed that, during his twelve years' professional duties, he never lost one real friend; and if ill health sometimes compelled him to delay his visits, or fail in his attentions to the sick,

"Consider why the change was wrought,
You'll find it his misfortune, not his fault."

Perhaps the most remarkable features in the doctor's mental constitution were quickness of perception, accurate discrimination, and deliberative judgment, regulated by thorough knowledge of his profession. By the exercise of these qualities he was highly successful in his treatment.

As a man, he was social and honest; as a friend, cordial, sincere,

and faithful; as a physician, humane and skillful. In the strictest sense of the term, he was a gentleman; but nowhere did he appear to better advantage than at the bed-side of his patient. Mild and amiable in disposition, urbane in manners, dignified in deportment, on his bland and cheerful countenance the ever-kindling smile beckoned the sick and desponding to hope, trust and confidence; nor was that confidence abused by selfish dissimulation. If his patient or the friends either needed or desired a consultation, it was enough.

In his relations to other physicians, he was modest and complaisant, but highly sensible to any infraction of established rules of etiquette or ethics, and was sure to meet such dereliction with indignant reserve and professional non-intercourse.

He was opposed to every species of quackery, and to anything which bears its semblance. Even the obtrusive pretences of the Hahnemannian delusion could not captivate his settled and invulnerable principles. When invited to the house of his particular friend, to consult with a distinguished leader in homœopathy, who had been sent for to see his patient, he replied, apparently against his own interest: "I would be pleased to meet with Dr. J. as an old friend and preceptor, *but not as a physician.*"

The delicacy of his constitution rendering him unable to endure the fatigue of a laborious country practice, especially in the night, and in bad weather, he at one time conceived the idea of abandoning his profession, at least in part. This, together with a desire to be useful to the public, might have induced him to yield to the solicitations of his friends, and he was elected supervisor of his town, which office he continued to hold for six consecutive years. At the time of his death he was one of the committee for erecting the new public County Buildings. In 1853 he represented his district in the State Assembly.

In all these relations he discharged his official duties with great fidelity, and with entire satisfaction to his constituents.

In the latter part of the summer of 1853 he had a severe attack of fever, from which he slowly recovered, but with great difficulty. During the two succeeding years his health, though feeble, was such as to enable him to travel a little, enjoy the society of his friends, and occasionally to visit the sick in his immediate neighborhood; indeed, his physician entertained hopes of his ultimate recovery. But in the fall of 1855 slight cough and fever indicated the insidious approach of pulmonary disease, which terminated his existence on the 28th of March, 1856, in his 39th year.

He was not a member of any religious denomination, but a liberal

supporter of the Presbyterian Church, which he regularly attended when not prevented by other duties, and for which he entertained a decided preference. In his last sickness he received the ordinances of the church, and professed his faith in the Saviour.

In the life of Dr. Finch we have a conspicuous example of private, public, and professional excellence, worthy the imitation of all who, like him, would live esteemed, honored and beloved, and who, like him, would die lamented by all who knew him.

DR. HENRY WHITE, of Yorktown, was born August 31st, 1781. He was the son of Dr. Ebenezer White, a sketch of whose life will be found in these memoirs. Having received a good common English education for the times in which he lived, he commenced the study of medicine at the age of eighteen, under the tuition of his father. In the fall and winter of 1802 he attended the medical lectures at Columbia College, in New York City.

In 1803 he effected a copartnership with Dr. Joshua Secor, in the City of New York, to practice medicine in connection with a drug store. The same year, however, he returned to his father, preferring country to city practice.

In 1804 he went to Hackensack, Dutchess County, N. Y., and engaged in practice; but not feeling encouraged with the location, again returned to his native place. In the same year he married a daughter of Rev. Silas Constant; their matrimonial alliance was happy, but brief; in about two years he was called to mourn the loss of his much beloved wife. In the year 1809 he was elected delegate of this Society, to the State Medical Society, for a term of four years. In 1816 he married the widow of the late Dr. Stephen Fowler, of New Castle, in this county; she is a daughter of Dr. Elisha Belcher, whose biography has been given. Having for several years been surrogate of the county, in 1823 he became one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas, which office he held for many years. He took an active interest in all the great religious and moral enterprises of his time; Bible, temperance, anti-slavery, tract, Sabbath-school, and other societies received his encouragement, and generally found in him an earnest and efficient officer. Indeed, so much of his time was devoted to these engagements, that he could hardly be regarded as one of the practicing physicians of our county, for many years of his life. He was a man possessed of noble sentiments and undoubted veracity.

Punctuality was one of his prominent traits; it was his rule never to let any one suffer by his neglect or procrastination. He was very scrupulous in his observance of the sacred Sabbath; to him it was a period of delight—a day of holy rest; he would never permit secular conversation, or the reading of secular papers or books, on that day.

He was very hospitable, and took great pleasure in entertaining clergymen in particular.

Dr. White continued the general practice of medicine in his native town until about the year 1840; after which, he merely attended upon the sick as a consulting physician.

He died of congestion of the lungs, in November, 1857, aged seventy-six years.

With these simple, brief, and imperfect sketches of our deceased brethren, my present labor of love will cease. I will therefore

“No further seek their merits to disclose,
Or draw their frailties from their dread abode;
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of their Father and their God.”

I had hoped to obtain an account of several others, at least equally worthy of mention as those included in these sketches; I have failed, however, in obtaining the required materials. I shall, therefore, console myself with the hope that another, with more zeal, energy, and ability, may commence the work anew; and should these sketches prove serviceable in rendering such an effort more easy and complete, I shall feel amply repaid for the time bestowed on them.

May the members of this Society, and all who may chance to read these simple narratives, be stimulated to increased exertions to elevate their intellectual, professional, moral, and religious character to a position which shall justly entitle them to be held up as examples of the truly good physician. With this noble object in view, let us be diligent and lose no time, for all should

“Remember, life is but a shadow,
Its date the intermediate breath we draw;
Ten thousand accidents in ambush lie,
To crush the frail and fickle tenement,
Which, like the brittle hour-glass measuring time,
Is often broke ere half its sands are run.”

